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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/695,882	10/30/2003	Harumi Morino	58799-100	7806

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EXAMINER
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

	Application No.	Applicant(s)
Office Action Summary	10/695,882	MORINO ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Kari L. Schmidt	2139	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE <u>3</u> MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.
- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *15 August 2007*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL.**   2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1,2,4-8 and 12-22* is/are pending in the application.

    4a) Of the above claim(s) *3 and 9-11* is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on *30 October 2003* is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

    Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

    a)☒ All   b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

      1.☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

      2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

      3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

    * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1)☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2)☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3)☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4)☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.

5)☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application

6)☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set

forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this

application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set

forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action

has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 20

August 2007 has been entered.

Notice to Applicant

This communication is in response to the amendment filed on 08/20/2007.

Claims 1-2, 4-8, 12-22 remains pending. Claims 3 and 9-11 have been canceled

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments have been considered but are moot in view of the

new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly
claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 1, 2, 4, 13, 16, and 22 recites the limitation "restores number of

simultaneous issues" in the claims. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this

limitation in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set
> forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and
> the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the
> invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains.
> Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-2, 4-8, and 12-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being

unpatentable over Inoue et al. (US 2003/0005135 A1) in view of Okamoto et al. (US

2004/0034786 A1).

Claim 1

Inoue discloses a license management system comprising: a license server connected

to a network (see at least, Fig. 22: (2210): "right management server"); and a terminal

connected to the network (see at least, Fig. 22: (150): "terminal"); said server including:

a first memory unit for storing a first license which includes a content key for decrypting

content and a first use condition of content (see at least, Fig. 22 (2215): "user

information management unit"); an issuance unit for, according to a request from said

terminal (see at least, [0159]: "the license ticket generation unit receives, from the

terminal for which a plurality of users are registered, the license ticket issuance request

in which the owner of the right information"), issuing a second license which includes a

second use condition set such that a value of said second use condition is within a

value of said first use condition of said content (see at least, [0159]: "with the

authentication information (content distribution server), it generates the license ticket

based on the right information of the user identified with authentication information for

the terminal, the license ticket generation unit issues the license ticket with the

temporary usage restriction registered in the temporary restriction database being

appended to, in response to the license ticket issuance request form the temporary user

registered in the temporary usage restriction database; temporary license = second

license"); and a transmission unit for transmitting to said terminal said second license

that is issued(see at least Fig. 22 (132): distribution unit distribute the second license to

the terminal); and wherein said terminal includes (see at least, Fig. 22: (150): terminal):

a license control unit for managing said second license transmitted from said server

(see at least, Fig. 22 (150): a license control unit for managing said second license

transmitted from said server (Fig. 23 (2300)) temporary usage restriction); and a

reproduction unit for reproducing said content by use of said content key (see at least,

Fig. 22 (156) content reproduction unit) and wherein said server further includes: a

second memory unit for storing information on said second license which includes an

expiration date/time for said terminal (see at least, Fig. 22 (2214)); and restores number

of simultaneous issues of said first license when said return control section

automatically restores to said return state of said second license when it expires (see at least, [0162-0163]).

Inoue fails to disclose a second memory unit for storing a return mode flag which indicates automatic return or return required; and a return control section for automatically restoring to a return state of said second license when said return mode flag indicates said automatic return and said expiration date/time for said terminal has passed, so that said issuance unit can issue said second license for another terminal; and wherein said return control section in said server restores number of simultaneous issues of said first license when said return control section automatically restores to said return state of said second license.

However Okamoto discloses a second memory unit for storing which includes an expiration date/time for said terminal and a return mode flag which indicates automatic return or return required (see at least, [0012] and [0117-0136] and Fig. 21 (2224b)); and a return control section for automatically restoring to a return state of said second license when said return mode flag indicates said automatic return and said expiration date/time for said terminal has passed, so that said issuance unit can issue said second license for another terminal (see at least, [0012-0013], [0130], [0136]: "the server apparatus is accessed with a higher frequency due to returns of license tickets and requests for license tickets issues"); and wherein said return control section in said server restores said first license when said return control section automatically restores to said return state of said second license (see at least, [0012], [0092], [0169]: "and where the expiration of the LT effective period set for the LT is earlier than the usage

right effective period" and "the return of the LT and like from the user terminal and

update the usage right").

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the

invention was made to modify the teachings of Inoue to include second memory unit for

storing which includes an expiration date/time for said terminal and a return mode flag

which indicates automatic return or return required and a return control section for

automatically restoring to a return state of said second license when said return mode

flag indicates said automatic return and said expiration date/time for said terminal has

passed, so that said issuance unit can issue said second license for another terminal ;

and wherein said return control section in said server restores said first license when

said return control section automatically restores to said return state of said second

license as taught by Okamoto. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been

motivated to combine the teachings in order to provide a content usage management

system and like capable of reducing the load on the user's terminal apparatus and

satisfying the demand for various types of services for content usage.

Claim 2

Inoue discloses a server for issuing a content key for decrypting content, comprising: a

first memory unit for storing a first license which includes said content key and a first

use condition of said content (Fig. 22: (2215) "user information management unit"); an

issuance unit for, when a value of a use condition of said content requested by a

terminal does not exceed a value of said first use condition stored in said memory unit,

issuing a second license which includes said content key and a second use condition

(Fig. 23, page 20, [0162] "expiration date for registering the temporary user in the

terminal information in the terminal"); a communication unit for transmitting said second

license to said terminal (Fig. 22: (2214)); a second memory unit for storing information

on said second license which includes an expiration date/time for said terminal (see at

least, Fig. 22 (2214))

Inoue fails to disclose a second memory unit for storing a return mode flag

indicates automatic return or return required; and a return control section for

automatically restoring to a return state of said second license when said return mode

flag indicates said automatic return and said expiration date/time for said terminal has

passed, so that said issuance unit can issue said second license for another terminal;

and wherein said return control section restores number of simultaneous issues of said

first license when said return control section automatically restores to said return state

of said second license.

However Okamoto discloses a second memory unit for storing which includes an

expiration date/time for said terminal and a return mode flag which indicates automatic

return or return required (see at least, [0012] and [0117-0136] and Fig. 21 (2224b)); and

a return control section for automatically restoring to a return state of said second

license when said return mode flag indicates said automatic return and said expiration

date/time for said terminal has passed, so that said issuance unit can issue said second

license for another terminal (see at least, [0012-0013], [0130], [0136]: "the server

apparatus is accessed with a higher frequency due to returns of license tickets and

requests for license tickets issues"); and wherein said return control section in said server restores said first license when said return control section automatically restores to said return state of said second license (see at least, [0012], [0092], [0169]: "and where the expiration of the LT effective period set for the LT is earlier than the usage right effective period" and "the return of the LT and like from the user terminal and update the usage right").

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the teachings of Inoue to include second memory unit for storing which includes an expiration date/time for said terminal and a return mode flag which indicates automatic return or return required and a return control section for automatically restoring to a return state of said second license when said return mode flag indicates said automatic return and said expiration date/time for said terminal has passed, so that said issuance unit can issue said second license for another terminal ; and wherein said return control section in said server restores said first license when said return control section automatically restores to said return state of said second license as taught by Okamoto. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to combine the teachings in order to provide a content usage management system and like capable of reducing the load on the user's terminal apparatus and satisfying the demand for various types of services for content usage.

Claim 4

Inoue discloses the server as claimed in claim 2, wherein: said first use condition includes the maximum allowable number of simultaneous issues indicating a number of issues of said second license which can be distributed at the same time (page 18, [0155] "temporary usage restriction system is a content distribution system that permits registration of plurality of users on one terminal").

Inoue fails to disclose and said return control section stops automatically restoring said return state of said second license when the maximum allowable number of simultaneous issues has exceeded its initial value stored in said first memory unit.

However Okamoto discloses return control section stops automatically restoring said return state of said second license when the maximum allowable number of simultaneous issues has exceeded its initial value stored in said first memory unit (see at least, [0012], [0092], [0169]: "the permitted number of LT issues" and "the return of the LT and like from the user terminal and update the usage right").

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the teachings of Inoue to include return control section stops automatically restoring said return state of said second license when the maximum allowable number of simultaneous issues has exceeded its initial value stored in said first memory unit as taught by Okamoto. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to combine the teachings in order to provide a content usage management system and like capable of reducing the load on the user's terminal apparatus and satisfying the demand for various types of services for content usage.

Claim 5

Inoue fails to disclose the server as claimed in claim 2, wherein said license information includes return mode information indicating whether or not said second license is to be returned, said return mode information being provided for each second license; and said return control section executes or stops return processing on said second license according to said return mode information.

However Okamoto wherein said license information includes return mode information indicating whether or not said second license is to be returned, said return mode information being provided for each second license; and said return control section executes or stops return processing on said second license according to said return mode information (see at least, [0012], [0117-0136], [0092], and [0169]).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the teachings of Inoue to include wherein said license information includes return mode information indicating whether or not said second license is to be returned, said return mode information being provided for each second license; and said return control section executes or stops return processing on said second license according to said return mode information as taught by Okamoto. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to combine the teachings in order to provide a content usage management system and like capable of reducing the load on the user's terminal apparatus and satisfying the demand for various types of services for content usage.

Claim 6

Inoue fails to disclose the server as claimed in claim 5, wherein said return control section is configured for setting said return mode information according to a request from said terminal.

However Okamoto discloses wherein said return control section is configured for setting said return mode information according to a request from said terminal (see at least, [0012]).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the teachings of Inoue to include wherein said return control section is configured for setting said return mode information according to a request from said terminal as taught by Okamoto. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to combine the teachings in order to provide a content usage management system and like capable of reducing the load on the user's terminal apparatus and satisfying the demand for various types of services for content usage.

Claim 7

Inoue fails to disclose the server as claimed in claim 5, wherein said return mode information includes information for determining whether said server is to automatically return said second license.

However Okamoto discloses wherein said return mode information includes information for determining whether said server is to automatically return said second license (see at least, [0012], [0117-0136], [0092], and [0169]).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the teachings of Inoue to include wherein said return mode information includes information for determining whether said server is to automatically return said second license as taught by Okamoto. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to combine the teachings in order to provide a content usage management system and like capable of reducing the load on the user's terminal apparatus and satisfying the demand for various types of services for content usage.

Claim 8

Inoue fails to disclose the server as claimed in claim 5, wherein said return mode information includes information for determining whether said terminal is to return said second license to said server.

However Okamoto discloses wherein said return mode information includes information for determining whether said terminal is to return said second license to said server (see at least, [0012], [0117-0136], [0092], and [0169]).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the teachings of Inoue to include wherein said return mode information includes information for determining whether said terminal is to return said second license to said server as taught by Okamoto. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to combine the teachings in order to provide a content usage management system and like capable of reducing the load on the user's terminal

apparatus and satisfying the demand for various types of services for content usage.

Claim 12

Inoue discloses the server as claimed in claim 2, wherein said first use condition

is determined by a manager of said content or a manager of said first license; and said

second use condition is determined by a user of said content (Fig. 22 (2215): "user

information management unit").

Claim 13

Inoue discloses the server as claimed in claim 2, wherein said first use condition

includes a maximum allowable number of simultaneous issues indicating a number of

issues of said second license which can be distributed at the same time; when said

issuance unit has issued said second license, (page 18, [0155] "content distribution

system that permits registration of plurality of users on one terminal." Fig. 23).

Inoue fails to disclose said issuance unit decrements the maximum allowable

number of simultaneous issues; and said return control section increments the

maximum allowable number of simultaneous issues to automatically restore to said

return state of said second license when said expiration date/time for said terminal has

passed.

However Okamoto said issuance unit decrements the maximum allowable

number of simultaneous issues [see at least, [0256-258]; and said return control section

increments the maximum allowable number of simultaneous issues to automatically

restore to said return state of said second license when said expiration date/time for said terminal has passed [see at least, [0256-258]).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the teachings of Inoue to include said issuance unit decrements the maximum allowable number of simultaneous issues; and said return control section increments the maximum allowable number of simultaneous issues to automatically restore to said return state of said second license when said expiration date/time for said terminal has passed as taught by Okamoto. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to combine the teachings in order to provide a content usage management system and like capable of reducing the load on the user's terminal apparatus and satisfying the demand for various types of services for content usage.

Claim 14

Inoue discloses the server as claimed in claim 2, wherein: when said issuance unit has issued said second license, said issuance unit inhibits further issuance of said second license; and when said expiration date/time for said terminal has passed (Fig. 22 (113): "content usage right database" = issuance unit; (2217) "license ticket generation unit" = expiration date/time of said content has passed and page 20, paragraph [0163]: "An expiration data for registering the temporary user in the terminal information in the terminal information database is described in the terminal registration expiration date.

When the date expires the temporary user's ID registered in the terminal information in the terminal information database is deleted.").

Inoue fails to disclose said return control section cancels said inhibition of further issuance of said second license to automatically restore to said return state of said second license.

However Okamoto discloses said return control section cancels said inhibition of further issuance of said second license to automatically restore to said return state of said second license (see at least, [0012], [0117-0136], [0092], [0169], and [0175])

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the teachings of Inoue to include said return control section cancels said inhibition of further issuance of said second license to automatically restore to said return state of said second license as taught by Okamoto. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to combine the teachings in order to provide a content usage management system and like capable of reducing the load on the user's terminal apparatus and satisfying the demand for various types of services for content usage.

Claim 15

Inoue discloses the server as claimed in claim 2, wherein said first use condition includes a first value of the number of reproduction operations of said content; said second use condition includes a second value of the number of reproduction operations of said content; when said issuance unit has issued said second license, said issuance

unit subtracts said second value of the number of reproduction operations from said first

value of the number of reproduction operations; upon receiving said second license

returned from said terminal, and when an expiration date/time for said terminal has

passed, said return control section maintains said first value of the number of

reproduction operations form which said second value of number of reproduction

operations has been subtracted to automatically restore to said return state of said

second license.   (see at least, Fig. 22: (156) and [0131]: "content reproduction Unit: the

license ticket processing unit 154 confirms at regular time intervals whether the content

reproduction unit 156 continues reproducing the content or not S1207), and if it

continues, interprets the license ticket 2 again, and decides whether the reproduction of

the content is permitted or not (S1202). When the reproduction of the content is

permitted depending upon the reproduction condition at that time, as a result of the

interpretation of the license ticket 2 (S1203), the license ticket processing unit 154

further interprets the license ticket 1 (S1204), and decides whether the reproduction of

the content is permitted or not at that time (S1205)", Fig. 23 and [0162]: "expiration date

for registering the temporary user in the terminal information in the terminal" [0059]:

"subtracts the usage duration or usage number in this request from the read-out content

rule so as to calculate the remaining usage duration or usage number and updates the

right information using the calculation result).

Inoue fails to disclose upon receiving said second license returned from said

terminal, said return control section adds an update of said second value of the number

of reproduction operations included in said second use conditions to said first value of

the number of reproduction operations.

However Okamoto discloses upon receiving said second license returned from

said terminal, said return control section adds an update of said second value of the

number of reproduction operations included in said second use conditions to said first

value of the number of reproduction operations [see at least, [0069] and [0256-258]).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the

invention was made to modify the teachings of Inoue to include said return control

section cancels said inhibition of further issuance of said second license to

automatically restore to said return state of said second license as taught by Okamoto.

One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to combine the teachings in

order to provide a content usage management system and like capable of reducing the

load on the user's terminal apparatus and satisfying the demand for various types of

services for content usage.

Claim 16

Inoue discloses a terminal capable of communicating with a server for issuing a content

key for decrypting content, said server comprising: a first memory unit for storing a first

license which includes said content key and a first use condition of said content (page 3,

[0058] "temporary usage restriction database"); an issuance unit for, when a value of a

second use condition of said content requested by said terminal does not exceed a

value of said first use condition stored in said first memory unit, issuing a second license

which includes said content key and said second use condition (page 19, paragraph

[0159] "the license ticket generation unit receives, from the terminal for which a plurality

of users are registered, the license ticket issuance request in which the owner of the

right information..); and a communication unit for transmitting said second license to

said terminal (Fig. 22, (119): "communication unit"); said terminal comprising (Fig. 22:

(140 and 150): a second memory unit for storing said content (Fig. 22 (155) "content

storage unit"); a communication unit for receiving said second license from said server

(Fig. 22, (152) "communication unit"); a decryption unit for decrypting said content in

said second memory unit by use of said content key included in said second license

(see at least, [0069]); a reproduction unit for reproducing the decrypted content

according to said second use condition included in said second license (Fig. 22, (154):

"license ticket processing unit"); and wherein said server further includes: a second

memory unit for storing information on said second license which includes an expiration

date/time for said terminal(see at least, Fig. 22 (2214)) and restores number of

simultaneous issues of said first license when said return control section automatically

restores to said return state of said second license when it expires (see at least, [0162-

0163]).

Inoue fails to disclose a second memory unit for storing a return mode flag which

indicates automatic return or return required; and a return control section for

automatically restoring to a return state of said second license when said return mode

flag indicates said automatic return and said expiration date/time for said terminal has

passed, so that said issuance unit can issue said second license for another terminal;

and wherein said return control section in said server restores number of simultaneous

issues of said first license when said return control section automatically restores to said

return state of said second license.

However Okamoto discloses a second memory unit for storing which includes an

expiration date/time for said terminal and a return mode flag which indicates automatic

return or return required (see at least, [0012] and [0117-0136] and Fig. 21 (2224b)); and

a return control section for automatically restoring to a return state of said second

license when said return mode flag indicates said automatic return and said expiration

date/time for said terminal has passed, so that said issuance unit can issue said second

license for another terminal (see at least, [0012-0013], [0130], [0136]: "the server

apparatus is accessed with a higher frequency due to returns of license tickets and

requests for license tickets issues"); and wherein said return control section in said

server restores said first license when said return control section automatically restores

to said return state of said second license (see at least, [0012], [0092], [0169]: "and

where the expiration of the LT effective period set for the LT is earlier than the usage

right effective period" and "the return of the LT and like from the user terminal and

update the usage right").

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the

invention was made to modify the teachings of Inoue to include a second memory unit

for storing which includes an expiration date/time for said terminal and a return mode

flag which indicates automatic return or return required and a return control section for

automatically restoring to a return state of said second license when said return mode

flag indicates said automatic return and said expiration date/time for said terminal has

passed, so that said issuance unit can issue said second license for another terminal ;

and wherein said return control section in said server restores said first license when

said return control section automatically restores to said return state of said second

license as taught by Okamoto. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been

motivated to combine the teachings in order to provide a content usage management

system and like capable of reducing the load on the user's terminal apparatus and

satisfying the demand for various types of services for content usage.

Claim 17

Inoue discloses the terminal as claimed in claim 16, wherein said reproduction unit

updates said second use condition each time said reproduction unit reproduces said

content (Fig. 22, (156) "content reproduction unit').

Claim 18

Inoue disclose the server as claimed in claim 2, wherein: when said issuance unit has

issued said second license in said first memory, said issuance unit changes said first

use condition; and when said expiration date/time for said terminal has passed, said

return control section restores said second license in said first memory to automatically

restore to said return state of said second license (see at least, [0159] "the license ticket

generation unit receives, from the terminal for which a plurality of users are registered,

the license ticket issuance request in which the owner of the right information and Fig.
22: (2214)).

Claim 19

Inoue fails to disclose the server as claims in claim 2, wherein said issuance unit

determines whether a return mode flag included in said request from said terminal

matches or not said return mode flag in said second memory unit, sets said return mode

flag included in said request from said terminal into said second license if matching, and

sets a return mode flag of said first license into said second license when a return reject

flag included in said request from said terminal is a predetermined value if not matching.

Okamoto discloses wherein said issuance unit determines whether a return

mode flag included in said request from said terminal matches or not said return mode

flag in said second memory unit, sets said return mode flag included in said request

from said terminal into said second license if matching, and sets a return mode flag of

said first license into said second license when a return reject [see at least, [0191-0208

and 0286].

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the

invention was made to modify the teachings of Inoue to include wherein said issuance

unit determines whether a return mode flag included in said request from said terminal

matches or not said return mode flag in said second memory unit, sets said return mode

flag included in said request from said terminal into said second license if matching, and

sets a return mode flag of said first license into said second license when a return reject

as taught by Okamoto. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to

combine the teachings in order to provide a content usage management system and

like capable of reducing the load on the user's terminal apparatus and satisfying the

demand for various types of services for content usage.

Claim 20

Inoue fails to disclose the server as claimed in claim 2, wherein said issuance unit sets

a value of a return inhibit flag included in said request from said terminal into said

second license if a return inhibit flag of said first license and a return inhibit flag included

in said request from said terminal satisfies a predetermined condition and sets a value

different from said value of a return inhibit flag included in said request from said

terminal into said second license if said return inhibit flag of said first license and said

return inhibit flag included in said request from said terminal does not satisfy said

predetermined condition and a return reject flag included in said request from said

terminal is predetermined value, and wherein said return inhibit flag of said first license

indicates return required or return inhibited.

Okamoto discloses wherein said issuance unit sets a value of a return inhibit flag

included in said request from said terminal into said second license if a return inhibit flag

of said first license and a return inhibit flag included in said request from said terminal

satisfies a predetermined condition and sets a value different from said value of a return

inhibit flag included in said request from said terminal into said second license if said

return inhibit flag of said first license and said return inhibit flag included in said request

from said terminal does not satisfy said predetermined condition and a return reject flag included in said request from said terminal is predetermined value, and wherein said return inhibit flag of said first license indicates return required or return inhibited (see at least, [0339-0341]).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the teachings of Inoue to include wherein said issuance unit sets a value of a return inhibit flag included in said request from said terminal into said second license if a return inhibit flag of said first license and a return inhibit flag included in said request from said terminal satisfies a predetermined condition and sets a value different from said value of a return inhibit flag included in said request from said terminal into said second license if said return inhibit flag of said first license and said return inhibit flag included in said request from said terminal does not satisfy said predetermined condition and a return reject flag included in said request from said terminal is predetermined value, and wherein said return inhibit flag of said first license indicates return required or return inhibited as taught by Okamoto. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to combine the teachings in order to provide a content usage management system and like capable of reducing the load on the user's terminal apparatus and satisfying the demand for various types of services for content usage.

Claim 21

Inoue fails to disclose the server as claimed in claim 2, wherein said issuance unit sets a value of an automatic return flag included in said request from said terminal into said second license if an automatic return flag of said first license and an automatic return flag included in said request from said terminal satisfies a predetermined condition and sets a value different from said value of an automatic return flag included in said request from said terminal into said second license if said automatic return flag of said first license and said automatic return flag included in said request from said terminal does not satisfy said predetermined condition and a return reject flag included in said request from said terminal is a predetermined value, and wherein said automatic return flag of said first license indicates automatic return not permitted or automatic return permitted.

Okamoto discloses wherein said issuance unit sets a value of an automatic return flag included in said request from said terminal into said second license if an automatic return flag of said first license and an automatic return flag included in said request from said terminal satisfies a predetermined condition and sets a value different from said value of an automatic return flag included in said request from said terminal into said second license if said automatic return flag of said first license and said automatic return flag included in said request from said terminal does not satisfy said predetermined condition and a return reject flag included in said request from said terminal is a predetermined value, and wherein said automatic return flag of said first license indicates automatic return not permitted or automatic return permitted (see at least, [0339-0341]).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the teachings of Inoue to include wherein said issuance unit sets a value of an automatic return flag included in said request from said terminal into said second license if an automatic return flag of said first license and an automatic return flag included in said request from said terminal satisfies a predetermined condition and sets a value different from said value of an automatic return flag included in said request from said terminal into said second license if said automatic return flag of said first license and said automatic return flag included in said request from said terminal does not satisfy said predetermined condition and a return reject flag included in said request from said terminal is a predetermined value, and wherein said automatic return flag of said first license indicates automatic return not permitted or automatic return permitted as taught by Okamoto. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to combine the teachings in order to provide a content usage management system and like capable of reducing the load on the user's terminal apparatus and satisfying the demand for various types of services for content usage.

Claim 22

Inoue discloses the server as claimed in claim 2, wherein said return control section deletes said information on said second license in said second memory unit without restoring said number of simultaneous issues of said first license when said second license which is returned from said terminal has already been automatically returned by said server (see at least, [0163]).

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kari L. Schmidt whose telephone number is 571-270-1385. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday: 7:30am - 5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ayaz Sheikh can be reached on 571-272-3795. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

KS

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